

HINGHAM ELDER SERVICES

Page 1 of 2

1. Please state your department's or committee's charge or job description.

The Hingham Department of Elder Services is the town focal point for the delivery of social services to Hingham's population 60 and older. Its mission is to support the independence of Hingham's senior citizens, advocate for their needs and enhance the quality of their lives. In an atmosphere of respect for the older adult, the Department of Elder Services coordinates program and services to encourage self-reliance, good health and community involvement.

2. To whom is your department or committee accountable?

The Board of Selectmen, voters

3. What three things contribute most to the successful functioning of your department or committee?

1. Board and staff work together on a common agenda through the long range plan in a productive, innovative and anticipatory manner.
2. Professional staff and volunteers have created a very warm and welcoming atmosphere at the Senior Center.
3. Strong community support.

4. What three things would you change to bring about more effective functioning?

1. Conduct a professional needs assessment of those 50 and older
2. Create more opportunities for input into Elder Services operations
3. Implement active committee structure within the Board
4. What challenges do you anticipate that might impact the work of your department or committee in the future and what changes would you suggest for addressing those challenges?

The population explosion of those 60 and older will have a dramatic impact not only on Elder Services but on the community at large. We anticipate a growth in program participation, the need for more flexible transportation options, programs to better support those who are caring for a spouse, parent, sibling, etc. While this is not an all inclusive list, it is among the issues that Elder Services has begun to examine within its long range plan.

To address these challenges we need to begin planning for a facility that is better equipped and up-to-date to accommodate the increased participation, current staffing patterns and funding. The challenge will also present an opportunity for more community involvement on a volunteer level within the Department.

5. Do you have anything to add?

As discussed briefly above, the shift in population will have a dramatic impact, not only on Elder Services but on the community at large. Housing options, public safety (i.e. 911 calls) property tax relief, transportation options are all issues that we should start to examine in preparation for the this population shift.